United Nations

Report of the Commission on Human Settlements

Eighteenth session (12-16 February 2001)

General Assembly
Official Records
Fifty-sixth session
Supplement No. 8 (A/56/8)

General Assembly
Official Records
Fifty-sixth session
Supplement No. 8 (A/56/8)

Report of the Commission on Human Settlements

Eighteenth session (12-16 February 2001)

United Nations • New York, 2001

Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

ISSN 0252-5283

CONTENTS

Chapter			Page
I.	INTRODUCTION		1
II.	ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION		2
	A.	Opening of the session	2
	B.	Attendance	2
	C.	Election of officers	4
	D.	Credentials	4
	E.	Adoption of the agenda	4
	F.	Organization of work	6
	G.	Pledging of contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation	6
	H.	Work of the Committee of the Whole	8
	I.	Work of the Drafting Committee and adoption of resolutions by the Commission	8
	J.	Adoption of the report on the session	8
III.	PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND OTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION		8
	A.	Introduction	8
	B.	Discussion	9
	C.	Action taken by the Commission	9
IV.	CLOSURE OF THE SESSION		10

Annexes

I. RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION AT ITS EIGHTEENTH SESSION 12

A. Resolution requiring action by the Economic and Social Council 12

B. Other resolutions 12

II. LIST OF DOCUMENTS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT ITS EIGHTEENTH SESSION 34

III. SUMMARIES BY THE CHAIR OF THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, OF THE CONSULTATIONS ON THE DECENTRALIZATION AND STRENGTHENING OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND OF THE DIALOGUES WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND OTHER PARTNERS 37

A. High-level segment 37

B. Consultations on the decentralization and strengthening of local authorities 39

C. Dialogues with local authorities and other partners 41

IV. SUMMARIES OF OPENING STATEMENTS 43

A. Statement by Mr. Germán García Durán, Chair of the Commission on Human Settlements at its seventeenth session 43

B. Opening remarks by Mrs. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) 43

C. Statement by Mr. Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme 44

D. Statement by H.E. Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi, President of Kenya 45

E. Statement by Mr. Sid-Ali Ketrandji, Chair of the Commission at its eighteenth session 47

V. MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AT ITS EIGHTEENTH SESSION 48

VI. COMMONWEALTH INPUT TO THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR AN OVERALL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HABITAT AGENDA 49

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Commission on Human Settlements was established in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 32/162 of 19 December 1977.

2. The report of the Commission on the work of its eighteenth session is submitted to the General Assembly in accordance with section II, paragraph 6, of resolution 32/162.

3. The Commission consists of 58 members, each elected for a four-year term: 16 from African States, 13 from Asian States, 6 from Eastern European States, 10 from Latin American and Caribbean States and 13 from Western European and other States. At present the Commission is composed of the following members:

Algeria**
Argentina*
Austria***
Bangladesh***
Barbados**
Benin**
Bolivia*
Brazil*
Cameroon*
Chile*
China***
Colombia**
Croatia**
Czech Republic**
Democratic Republic of the Congo*
Egypt***
Ethiopia***
Finland*
France***
Gabon*
Gambia*
Germany**
Greece**
Guinea***
Haiti***
India**
Iran, Islamic Republic of*
Iraq***
Italy***
Jamaica***
Japan*
Jordan**
Kenya**
Lithuania*
Madagascar***
Malaysia**
Mali*
Mexico**
Morocco**
Norway**
Pakistan*
Philippines**
Republic of Moldova***
Russian Federation*
Senegal*
Spain**
Sri Lanka**
Sweden***
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia***
Trinidad and Tobago***
Turkey*
Uganda**
United Arab Emirates***
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*
United Republic of Tanzania***
United States of America*
Viet Nam*

4. The eighteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements was held at the headquarters of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), Nairobi, from 12 to 16 February 2001.

---

* Term of office expires on 31 December 2002.
** Term of office expires on 31 December 2003.
*** Term of office expires on 31 December 2004.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Opening of the session

5. The session was opened on Monday, 12 February 2001, by Mr. Germán García Durán, Chair of the Commission at its seventeenth session. A summary of his statement is provided in annex IV to the present proceedings.

6. The opening statement by the Chair was preceded by a presentation by 200 primary schoolchildren, including visually handicapped pupils and street children, who had spent the previous two days constructing a "ship of the future", representing their perception of life in cities. They recited poems and sang songs on the theme of water and conducted a "uniting water ceremony".

7. Following the statement by Mr. García Durán, a message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations was read out by the Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat), Mrs. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka. The text of the Secretary-General's message is reproduced in annex V below.

8. The Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat), Mrs. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, then delivered a policy statement. A summary of her statement appears in annex IV below.

9. The Commission also heard a statement from Mr. Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). A summary of this statement appears in annex IV below.

10. H.E. the President of the Republic of Kenya, Hon. Daniel Toroitich arap Moi, then addressed the Commission and inaugurated the session. A summary of his statement is provided in annex IV below.

B. Attendance

11. The following States members of the Commission were represented:

Algeria
Argentina
Austria
Bangladesh
Barbados
Brazil
Cameroon
Chile
China
Colombia
Croatia
Czech Republic
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Egypt
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Gambia
Germany
Greece
India
Iran, Islamic Republic of
Iraq
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Kenya
Madagascar
Malaysia
Mali
Mexico
Morocco
Norway
Pakistan
Philippines
Russian Federation
Senegal
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sweden
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Turkey

Uganda
United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America

12. The following States not members of the Commission participated as observers:

Bahrain
Belgium
Botswana
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Canada
Comoros
Côte d'Ivoire
Cyprus
Denmark
Djibouti
Ghana
Hungary
Indonesia
Israel
Kuwait
Malawi
Mozambique
Namibia
Netherlands
Nigeria
Poland
Portugal
Republic of Korea
Romania
Rwanda
Saudi Arabia
Sierra Leone
Slovakia
Somalia
South Africa
Sudan
Swaziland
Switzerland
Thailand
Tunisia
Venezuela
Yemen
Yugoslavia
Zambia
Zimbabwe

13. The Holy See was represented by an observer.

14. The following United Nations bodies were represented:

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

15. The following specialized agencies were represented:

International Labour Organization (ILO)
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

16. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: Commonwealth Secretariat, Company for Habitat and Housing in Africa (Shelter-Afrique).

17. Representatives of the following national, regional and international associations of local authorities attended the meeting: Advisory Committee of Local Authorities, All Local Authorities Government Association of Kenya (ALGAK), Bremen Initiative, Capacity 21, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (Council of Europe), International Union of Local Authorities (IULA).

18. The local authorities of the following cities were also represented: Municipality of Allahabad, Dubai Municipality, Libreville (Gabon), Moscow, Municipality of Rio de Janeiro.

19. In addition, 84 non-governmental organizations were represented. A full list of the non-governmental organizations attending the session, together with the names and contacts of their representatives, may be found in the final list of participants, which is available under the symbol HS/C/18/INF/5.

20. One private-sector organization was represented.

21. The Global Parliamentarians on Habitat were also represented.

C. Election of officers

22. At the 1st plenary meeting, on 12 February 2001, Mr. Sid-Ali Ketrandji (Algeria) was elected Chair of the Commission at its eighteenth session.

23. The following other officers were also elected for the session:

Vice-Chairs: Mr. S.K. Bhattacharya (Bangladesh)
Mr. José Luis Casal (Argentina)
Mr. Alexander Ignatiev (Russian Federation)

Rapporteur: Mr. Osman Mengü Büyükdavras (Turkey)

24. Following his election, Mr. Ketrandji made a statement, a summary of which is contained in annex IV below.

D. Credentials

25. In pursuance of rule 11, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure of the Commission, the Bureau reported to the Commission at its 7th plenary meeting, on 16 February 2001, that it had examined the credentials submitted by delegations attending the eighteenth session of the Commission and had found them to be in order. The Commission approved the report of the Bureau on credentials at its 7th plenary meeting.

E. Adoption of the agenda

26. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 12 February 2001, the Commission adopted the provisional agenda for the eighteenth session as contained in document HS/C/18/1, as follows:

1. Election of officers.

2. Credentials.

3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.

4. Activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat): progress report of the Executive Director.

5. Follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II):

   (a) Local implementation of the Habitat Agenda, including the role of local authorities;

   (b) International cooperation and the review of mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

   (c) Lessons learned from best practices and partnerships in the achievement of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world.

6. Special themes:

   (a) Security of tenure;

   (b) Urban governance.

7. Work programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2002-2003 and budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 2002-2003.

8. Coordination matters:

   (a) Cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme;

   (b) Cooperation with agencies and organizations within the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations;

   (c) Matters arising out of the resolutions of major legislative organs of the United Nations and other intergovernmental bodies which are brought to the attention of the Commission.

9. Themes for the nineteenth and future sessions of the Commission.

10. Other matters.

11. Provisional agenda and other arrangements for the nineteenth session of the Commission.

12. Adoption of the report of the session.

13. Closure of the session.

F. Organization of work

27. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 12 February 2001, the Commission established a sessional Committee of the Whole and allocated agenda items 6 (a), 6 (b), 7, 8 and 9 to it. The remaining items were considered in the plenary.

28. Following consultations with the Bureaus of the Commission on Human Settlements and of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNCHS (Habitat), and as proposed in the revised annotated provisional agenda (HS/C/18/1/Add.1/Rev.1, annex III, paras. 4-11), it was decided that the plenary should divide its work into three segments: first, a high-level segment, which was held from 12 to 13 February 2001, and at which the Commission considered agenda items 4 and 5; second, consultations on the decentralization and strengthening of local authorities, which took place on 13 February; and third, dialogues with local authorities and other partners, which were held on 14 February.

29. Summaries by the Chair of the debate in the high-level segment, the consultations on the decentralization and strengthening of local authorities, and the dialogues with local authorities and other partners appear in annex III below.

30. In addition, the Commission established a Drafting Committee to consider draft resolutions.

G. Pledging of contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation

31. At the 3rd, 4th and 7th plenary meetings, in pursuance of Commission resolution 8/8 calling for pledges of financial support to be made at regular sessions of the Commission, a number of the participating delegations made or reiterated pledges on behalf of their Governments of the following amounts to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the year 2001:

		Approximate US dollar equivalent
Algeria		10 000
Austria	960,000 Austrian schillings	64 123
Bangladesh		1 500
Burkina Faso		1 200
Cameroon		28 571
China	US$ 60,000 250,000 yuan renminbi	60 000 30 244
Colombia		12 000
India		100 000
Israel		7 500
Kenya		44 000
Madagascar	100 million Malagasy francs	15 980
Malaysia		15 000
Namibia	100,000 Namibian dollars	12 706
Norway	5 million Norwegian kroner	561 798
Poland		10 000
Republic of Korea		15 000
Russian Federation		100 000
Sweden	7 million Swedish kronor	728 070
United Kingdom	1 million pounds sterling	1 449 275
United Republic of Tanzania	5 million Tanzanian shillings	6 289
Zambia		10 000
Zimbabwe	200,000 Zimbabwe dollars	3 636
Total		3 286 892

H. Work of the Committee of the Whole

32. The Committee of the Whole, which was chaired by Mr. S.K. Bhattacharya (Bangladesh), Vice-Chair of the Commission, held five meetings, from 12 to 15 February 2001.

I. Work of the Drafting Committee and adoption of resolutions by the Commission

33. The Drafting Committee, which was chaired by Mr. José Luis Casal (Argentina), Vice-Chair of the Commission, held 10 meetings, between 13 and 16 February 2001. Of the 13 draft resolutions before the Committee, it reached agreement on 10. One resolution, on the impact of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) on the young (HS/C/18/CRP.6), was withdrawn.

34. The Drafting Committee was unable to reach consensus on two draft resolutions, on the establishment of the Committee of Permanent Representatives as an inter-sessional subsidiary body of the Commission on Human Settlements (HS/C/18/L.10) and on illegal Israeli human settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories (HS/C/18/CRP.2/Rev.2). The two draft resolutions were submitted directly to the plenary for its consideration.

35. At the 8th plenary meeting, the Commission adopted the draft resolution on the establishment of the Committee of Permanent Representatives as an inter-sessional subsidiary body of the Commission, following a statement by a representative of the secretariat that its adoption would have no programme or budgetary implications.

36. Also at the 8th plenary meeting, the Commission held a roll-call vote at the request of the representative of the United States on the draft resolution on illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. The draft resolution was adopted by 22 votes to 1, with 1 abstentions.

37. The resolutions, as adopted by the Commission, are contained in annex I below, together with an indication of the date and meeting of their adoption. Except as otherwise indicated in annex I, all resolutions were adopted by consensus.

J. Adoption of the report on the session

38. The present proceedings were adopted by the Commission at its 7th plenary meeting, on 16 February 2001.

III. PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND OTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

A. Introduction

39. The Commission considered agenda item 11 at its 7th plenary meeting, on 16 February 2001. It had before it a note by the Executive Director on the provisional agenda and other arrangements for the nineteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements (HS/C/18/14).

B. Discussion

40. There was general agreement with the secretariat's recommendation that the nineteenth session of the Commission be held in April or May 2003. Several delegations, referring to problems that had arisen during the current session because it had followed immediately after the twenty-first session of the UNEP Governing Council, asked that efforts be made to ensure that the next session of the Commission not follow so closely or otherwise conflict with other meetings, such as those of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

41. As to the duration of the next session, there was a division of opinion among the delegations. In the interests of economy, both for the Centre and for delegations, several argued for a five-day session, noting that even though it had had a heavy agenda during the current session, the Commission had accomplished all of its work. Others argued for a return to an eight-day session, as recommended by the secretariat, holding that a five-day session was unduly taxing, requiring all-night drafting sessions. More important, such sessions required meetings and other events to run simultaneously, which deprived smaller delegations of the chance to participate fully.

C. Action by the Commission

42. At its 7th plenary meeting, on 16 February 2001, the Commission decided that its nineteenth session would be held from 5 to 9 May 2003 at the headquarters of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in Nairobi. At the same meeting, the Commission decided to adopt the following provisional agenda for its nineteenth session:

1. Election of officers.

2. Credentials.

3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.

4. Activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat): progress report of the Executive Director.

5. Follow-up to the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

6. Special themes:

   (a) Urban development strategies and shelter strategies favouring the poor;

   (b) The rural dimension of sustainable urban development.

7. Report of the Executive Director on the dialogues on effective decentralization and strengthening of local authorities.

8. Work programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2004-2005 and budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 2004-2005.

9. Proposed medium-term plan of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the period 2006-2009.

10. Coordination matters:

(a) Cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme;

(b) Cooperation with agencies and organizations within the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations;

(c) Matters arising out of the resolutions of major legislative organs of the United Nations and other intergovernmental bodies which are brought to the attention of the Commission.

11. Themes for the twentieth and future sessions of the Commission.

12. Other matters.

13. Provisional agenda and other arrangements for the twentieth session of the Commission.

14. Adoption of the report of the session.

15. Closure of the session.

IV. CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

43. In her closing remarks, the Executive Director said that the session had allowed her to enter into substantive discussions with delegations on the future of the Centre and on the direction of human settlements in international development, almost five years after Habitat II. She noted that the delegations had engaged in intensive debates on the agenda items, with very constructive negotiations on resolutions, substantive dialogues between Habitat Agenda partners and a series of side events on matters of interest to the future of human settlements. The eighteenth session had been very successful and had adopted very significant resolutions concerning revitalization and the Centre's work with Governments and partners in civil society.

44. She was particularly pleased that the inclusion of dialogues with partners in the plenary discussions, introduced only at the last session of the Commission, had become a core element in the work of the Commission. She was impressed by the consistent references made by many delegates to the importance of the new strategic vision which had been adopted at the previous session. That had served to underline and reinforce the endorsement that the Centre had received for its focus on normative activities; the discussions at the eighteenth session already pointed to the very positive results of the new strategy.

45. She noted with satisfaction that the eighteenth session had confirmed the importance of secure tenure and urban governance in achieving adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world. Moreover, the specific invitation to Governments and all other partners of the Centre to mobilize further contributions to the two campaigns had come at the right moment and was clearly understood as an endorsement by the Commission.

46. The intensive discussion and subsequent approval of the work programme and the budget had confirmed that revitalization of the Centre was an ongoing process. Continuing support by the member States was vital if the Centre's capacity for the discharge of its mandate as a focal point in the United Nations system for the Habitat Agenda was to be enhanced.

47. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chair declared the eighteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements closed at 8 p.m. on 16 February 2001.

Annex I

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION AT ITS EIGHTEENTH SESSION

		Date of adoption	Page
	A. Resolution requiring action by the Economic and Social Council		
18/1	Establishment of the Committee of Permanent Representatives as an inter-sessional subsidiary body of the Commission on Human Settlements	16 February 2001	13
	B. Other resolutions		
18/2	Themes for the nineteenth session of the Commission	16 February 2001	15
18/3	Global campaigns for secure tenure and urban governance	16 February 2001	16
18/4	Implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/242 and cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme	16 February 2001	18
18/5	International cooperation and the review of mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the Habitat Agenda	16 February 2001	19
18/6	Work programme and budget of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2002-2003	16 February 2001	21
18/7	Countries with economies in transition	16 February 2001	24
18/8	Youth	16 February 2001	25
18/9	Revitalization of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)	16 February 2001	26
18/10	The role of local authorities	16 February 2001	28
18/11	Intensifying dialogue on effective decentralization and strengthening of local authorities within the framework of implementing the Habitat Agenda	16 February 2001	30
18/12	Illegal Israeli human settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories	16 February 2001	31

18/1. Establishment of the Committee of Permanent Representatives as an inter-sessional subsidiary body of the Commission on Human Settlements

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling its resolutions 12/8 of 3 May 1989, 13/3 of 8 May 1991, 15/9 of 1 May 1995 and 16/8 of 7 May 1997, and in particular its resolution 17/5 of 14 May 1999,

Also recalling the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council, especially rules 24 and 27, and the rules of procedure of the Commission on Human Settlements,

Taking note of the report of the Executive Director on the role of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), [1]

Recognizing and welcoming the role performed by the Committee of Permanent Representatives in accordance with the above resolutions,

Emphasizing the importance of efficient, transparent and representative governing structures of the Centre to enable it to fulfil its role and mandate as contained in General Assembly resolutions 32/162 of 19 December 1977 and 51/177 of 16 December 1996, and in particular in the implementation of the Istanbul Declaration[2] and the Habitat Agenda,[3]

Noting that the Division of Conference Services of the United Nations Office at Nairobi will provide at no cost to the Centre interpretation services for the proceedings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, once it is officially established,

1. Recommends to the Economic and Social Council the establishment of the Committee of Permanent Representatives as an inter-sessional subsidiary body of the Commission on Human Settlements;

2. Decides that, upon approval by the Economic and Social Council, the Committee of Permanent Representatives shall constitute an inter-sessional governing body of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) with the Centre functioning as the secretariat of the Committee, and shall have the following terms of reference:

(a) To review and monitor, within the policy and budgetary framework provided by the Commission, the implementation of the work programme of the Centre, as well as the implementation of decisions of the Commission;

(b) To review the draft work programme and budget of the Centre during their preparation by the Centre;

(c) To prepare draft decisions and resolutions for consideration by the Commission;

---

[1] HS/C/18/2/Add.2 and Add.2/Corr.2.

[2] Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3-14 June 1996 (A/CONF.165/14), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[3] Ibid., annex II.

(d) To meet at least four times in a year with the participation of the Executive Director of the Centre;

3. Recommends to the Economic and Social Council that the subsidiary body shall consist of the representatives of all States Members of the United Nations and members of its specialized agencies which are accredited to the Centre;

4. Further recommends to the Economic and Social Council that the subsidiary body shall elect a bureau composed of a chair, three vice-chairs and a rapporteur for a period of two years taking into account the principles of rotation and equitable geographical representation;

5. Authorizes the Bureau of the Commission, upon approval by the Economic and Social Council, to establish the inter-sessional subsidiary body;

6. Invites the Economic and Social Council to decide on the operative languages of the Committee of Permanent Representatives according to the following:

(a) The Committee of Permanent Representatives uses the conference services at the United Nations Office at Nairobi for interpretation between the three working languages of the Economic and Social Council and up to the six official languages of the United Nations, considering that interpretation services will be provided by the United Nations Office at Nairobi at no cost to the Committee of Permanent Representatives;

(b) The Committee of Permanent Representatives, following the practice elsewhere in the United Nations system, conducts its business on the basis of conference room papers that are circulated in the language of submission;

(c) All submission of documents from the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the Commission on Human Settlements is regarded as official documentation for the Commission;

7. Resolves to review at its nineteenth session the question of the use of languages in the Committee of Permanent Representatives, on the basis of the outcome of the deliberations in the Economic and Social Council;

8. Requests the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to report to the Commission on the work of the Committee;

9. Recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following decision:

"The Economic and Social Council,

"Recalling its rules of procedure, especially rules 24 and 27;

"Having considered the recommendation of the Commission on Human Settlements concerning the establishment of the Committee of Permanent Representatives as an inter-sessional subsidiary body of the Commission as contained in Commission resolution 18/1 of 16 February 2001;

"Recognizing the need for a properly mandated subsidiary body that can act during the inter-sessional period in terms of review and monitoring of the implementation of the decisions and resolutions adopted by the Commission;

"1. Approves the establishment of the Committee of Permanent Representatives as an inter-sessional subsidiary body of the Commission on Human Settlements and endorses the terms of reference given to it by the Commission;

"2. Decides that the Committee of Permanent Representatives may set up working groups without prior decision of the Council or the Commission;

"3. Asks the Commission on Human Settlements to amend its rules of procedure in order to take into account the establishment of the Committee of Permanent Representatives as an inter-sessional subsidiary body of the Commission;

"4. Requests the Commission on Human Settlements and the Secretary-General to report to the Council on the implementation of the present decision."

10. Requests the Executive Director to take action regarding the establishment of the Committee of Permanent Representatives as a subsidiary body of the Commission within the framework of expenditures that has existed for the informal operation of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and without prejudice to any new resources that may be made available;

11. Requests the Executive Director to report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Committee of Permanent Representatives and to the Commission at its nineteenth session.

8th meeting
16 February 2001

18/2. Themes for the nineteenth session of the Commission

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling the goals, principles, commitments and recommendations of the Habitat Agenda[3] on "Adequate shelter for all" and "Sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world",

Referring to the report of the Executive Director on themes for the nineteenth and future sessions of the Commission,[4]

Decides that the two special themes of the nineteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements shall be urban development and shelter strategies favouring the poor, and the rural dimension of sustainable urban development.

8th meeting
16 February 2001

---

[4] HS/C/18/13.

18/3. Global campaigns for secure tenure and urban governance

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling the goals and principles, commitments and recommendations of the Habitat Agenda[3] on "Adequate shelter for all" and "Sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world",

Also recalling General Assembly resolution 54/209 of 22 December 1999 on the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), which endorses "two global campaigns, concerning secure tenure and urban governance, as strategic points of entry for the effective implementation of the Habitat Agenda", and resolution 17/1 of 14 May 1999 of the Commission on Human Settlements on the same topic,

Noting with appreciation the initial activities undertaken by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the conceptualization and implementation of the campaigns, including the launches of the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure and the activities and partnerships under way for the Global Campaign for Urban Governance and, in this connection, the financial support already received from several member States,

Also noting with appreciation the active partnerships established with Habitat Agenda partners around the two campaigns, and recognizing the activities initiated within the existing and emerging working relationships,

Noting with concern the inadequate provision of affordable land in urban areas, the expansion of informal settlements, the increase of urban poverty and the continuing exclusion of the urban poor, in particular women-headed households,

Acknowledging the importance of secure tenure and urban governance in achieving adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development, and recognizing the need to continue and expand the broad-based, inclusive and global process involving governments at all levels, including local authorities, and relevant non-governmental organizations, including those representing the inadequately housed and homeless, and all other Habitat Agenda partners in implementing campaign activities at all levels,

Taking fully into consideration constitutional frameworks, national laws and different stages of economic and social development of each country,

Taking also into consideration the desirability for some countries to adapt or promulgate legislation according to the requirements of human settlements,

Noting that the term "norm" refers to generally accepted standards, guidelines or principles and should not be understood to imply that they are intended to be implemented through binding legal instruments,

I. Security of tenure

1. Takes note of the report of the Executive Director on the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure,[5] and emphasizes the need for countries to consider appropriate follow-up action;

---

[5] HS/C/18/6.

2. Takes note of the need for technical and legal expertise within the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to carry out the activities of the Campaign for Secure Tenure;

3. Calls upon Governments to develop, within their legal frameworks, actions at the national and local levels in order to enable people to have equal access to land and to promote security of residential tenure with special consideration of women and those living in poverty;

4. Welcomes the initiation of joint activities between the Centre and other relevant organizations within and outside the United Nations system, and, in this context, and in line with all the passages relating to security of tenure in chapters III and IV of the Habitat Agenda, requests the Executive Director as part of the Campaign for Secure Tenure to develop appropriate advisory guidelines taking into account national legislation, conditions and priorities of different countries;

II. Urban governance

Takes note of the initiative to illustrate and promote Inclusive Cities – formerly designated as Illustrative Cities – as a means of advocacy and capacity-building and calls upon Governments to support this initiative in their efforts to advance the practical application of the non-binding norms of both campaigns.

III. The global campaigns

1. Requests the Executive Director to establish legal advisory capacity within the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to provide legal assistance with respect to human settlements and housing legislation, in particular to the global campaigns for secure tenure and urban governance;

2. Calls upon the Executive Director to ensure continued expansion of the global campaigns through normative dialogue, awareness raising, capacity-building and technical cooperation;

3. Calls upon all Governments, in cooperation with civil-society partners, and within the framework of their legislation, to initiate and encourage dialogue and consideration of norms of secure tenure and urban governance at all levels and to share their experiences with the Centre for further appropriate action;

4. Invites all relevant stakeholders and partners of the Centre in the implementation of the global campaigns for secure tenure and urban governance to mobilize at the highest possible level their support and contributions and to formalize partnerships with the Centre to realize the goals of the campaigns;

5. Calls upon all Governments and external support agencies in a position to do so to provide financial and technical support to the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure and the Global Campaign for Urban Governance, to enable developing, and especially least developed, countries and their national and local Habitat partners to implement programmes relevant to the two campaigns;

6. Encourages the Executive Director to initiate all forms of partnership and to develop actions with special concern to capacity-building and poverty alleviation towards the implementation of the global campaigns;

7. Requests the Executive Director to report to it at its nineteenth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

8th meeting
16 February 2001

18/4. Implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/242 and cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 53/242 of 28 July 1999 entitled "Report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements",

Considering General Assembly resolution 40/199 of 17 December 1985 on cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme,

Noting the importance of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/242, and of cooperation between the Centre and the Programme for the effective implementation of Agenda 21[6] and the Habitat Agenda,[3] especially its chapter IV, sections C, D, and E,

Recalling its resolutions 15/8 of 1 May 1995 and 16/20 of 7 May 1997 on cooperation between the Centre and the Programme in the Sustainable Cities Programme, as well as its resolution 17/6 of 14 May 1999 on the views of the Commission on Human Settlements on the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements,

Considering the importance of strengthening the United Nations in the field of human settlements and of ensuring the full participation of the Centre in the work of the Environmental Management Group, the need for the involvement of major groups in the Centre's work, and the importance of information and monitoring and of strengthening capacity-building and technical assistance, in particular in developing countries, and developing human settlements indicators,

Taking note of the joint progress report of the Executive Directors of the Centre and the Programme on cooperation between the Centre and the Programme,[7]

Noting the importance of cooperation under the four subject areas reported in the joint progress report, namely: assessment of environmental conditions in human settlements; environmental aspects of policies, planning and management of human settlements - both rural and urban; environmentally sound and appropriate human settlements technology; and research, training and the dissemination of information on environmentally sound human settlements planning and management - especially the achievements of the joint Sustainable Cities Programme, the joint Urban Environment Forum, the Joint United Nations Environment Programme/United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) Task Force on the Balkans, and the joint Managing Water for African Cities Programme,

---

[6] Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1972, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[7] HS/C/18/10.

Noting with concern that the future of the long-term cooperation in the joint Sustainable Cities Programme is unclear since neither the Centre nor the Programme has been able to commit the necessary resources for their respective contributions for 2001 and onwards,

Emphasizing the importance of strengthening the capacity of the Centre in its Nairobi location and of ensuring the provision of requisite support and stable, adequate and predictable financial resources,

1. Requests the Executive Director to continue working to fully implement General Assembly resolution 53/242 which called for the strengthening of the United Nations in the field of environment and human settlements through the efforts of the Centre, by: stepping up cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) within the framework of their respective mandates and separate programmatic and organizational identities; preparing for the establishment of the Environmental Management Group; involving major groups and civil society in the Centre's work; strengthening its information and monitoring capacities; providing technical assistance and building capacities in developing countries; and continuing to develop indicators in the area of environment and human settlements;

2. Further requests the Executive Director to continue to expand cooperation between the Centre and the Programme;

3. Also requests the Executive Director to continue strengthening the core activities of the Centre in order to develop it into a centre of excellence in human settlements;

4. Also requests the Executive Director to expand on the joint work in the Managing Water for African Cities Programme and to establish a mechanism for coordinated decision-making and oversight;

5. Requests the Executive Director to continue collaboration in the joint assessment of human settlements vulnerability to natural and human-made disasters and in the joint formulation and implementation of vulnerability reduction strategies;

6. Urges the Secretary-General to provide the necessary resources from the regular budget of the United Nations to the Centre for the biennium 2002-2003 in accordance with current budgetary practices;

7. Encourages all Governments to actively support the implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/242 and the cooperation between the Centre and the Programme technically and financially;

8. Requests the Executive Director to report to it at its nineteenth session on progress in implementing the present resolution.

8th meeting
16 February 2001

18/5. International cooperation and the review of mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the Habitat Agenda

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling its resolution 17/17 of 14 May 1999 on international cooperation for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda,

Also recalling paragraph 195 of the Habitat Agenda,[3] which emphasizes that the implementation of the Habitat Agenda is the primary responsibility of each country at the national and local levels within the legal framework of each country, but recognizes that the overall decline in official development assistance is a serious cause for concern,

Further recalling paragraph 211 of the Habitat Agenda, which contains an appeal to all multilateral and bilateral development agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, regional and subregional development banks and funds to establish and/or strengthen cooperative mechanisms to integrate commitments and actions concerning adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development into their policies, programmes and operations,

Reaffirming that sustainable human settlements development is a domestic responsibility and that new and additional resources from the international community are crucial,

Further recalling that the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) is a member of the United Nations Development Group, whose principal objective is to strengthen the policy and programme coherence of United Nations development activities,

Welcoming Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 2000/1, concerning the review by the Executive Committee of the United Nations Development Group of the commitments made by relevant United Nations bodies and agencies on implementing the goals of the Habitat Agenda, the review by the Secretary-General of the participation by the Centre in all aspects of the work of the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its subsidiary machinery in the light of its role as a focal point in the United Nations system in implementing the Habitat Agenda, and the consideration by the Secretary-General of the adoption of a Habitat Agenda task manager system to facilitate coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda by the United Nations system,

1. Takes note of the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) on international cooperation and the review of mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;[8]

2. Reiterates its appeal to Governments in a position to do so to make voluntary financial contributions to the secretariat to assist developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, including, inter alia, representatives of parliaments, local authorities, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations networks from such countries, to participate in the upcoming special session of the United Nations General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

3. Calls upon United Nations organizations and agencies to use, where possible, the existing coordinating mechanisms of the United Nations Development Group and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework to demonstrate their capacity and complementary action and to make such efforts visible at all levels concerning the coordinated implementation of the goals of the Habitat Agenda, including the mobilization of additional international financial and technical support;

4. Invites the United Nations and other international organizations to strengthen the quality and consistency of their support for sustainable human settlements development in least developed countries within their respective mandates, and urges development partners that have accepted it to fulfil the internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance;

---

[8] HS/C/18/4.

5. Requests the Executive Director to take appropriate steps in order that Economic and Social Council decision 2000/1 is implemented;

6. Welcomes General Assembly resolution 55/195 of 20 December 2000 and urges the Executive Director, as requested in the resolution, to take a leadership and coordinating role in the Cities Alliance initiative launched by the Centre and the World Bank to promote operational partnerships for the reduction of urban poverty;

7. Calls on Governments in a position to do so, in particular those of developed countries, and international financial institutions to increase their support to further the implementation of the Cities Alliance initiative in human settlements of developing countries and countries in transition;

8. Emphasizes the need for adequate representation from developing countries in the Cities Alliance initiative, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/195;

9. Expresses its appreciation of the efforts already undertaken by developed countries and multilateral agencies under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative, recognizes that debt burden is a major hindrance inhibiting the development of sustainable human settlements in developing countries, and urges the international community to favourably address this matter;

10. Also requests the Executive Director to promote a merger of the Urban Environment Forum and the International Forum on Urban Poverty into a new urban forum, with a view to strengthening the coordination of international support to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

11. Further requests the Executive Director to report to it at its nineteenth session on the implementation of this resolution.

8th meeting
16 February 2001

18/6. Work programme and budget of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2002-2003

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements,[2] the Habitat Agenda[3] and General Assembly resolution 51/177 of 16 December 1996, by which, inter alia, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) was designated as focal point, within the United Nations system, for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda,

Noting, with satisfaction, the progress made so far in implementing the new strategic vision for a revitalized Centre,[9] in accordance with its resolution 17/7 of 14 May 1999, on revitalization of the Habitat Centre,

---

[9] HS/C/17/2/Add.2, annex.

Recognizing the need for the Centre's work programme to continue focusing on well-defined strategic issues and objectives, as adopted by the Commission at its seventeenth session, in order to contribute more effectively to the attainment of the goals of the Habitat Agenda,

Noting, with appreciation, the consultation with member Governments by the Centre during the preparation of the 2002-2005 medium-term plan and its use as a framework for the preparation of the proposed work programme for the biennium 2002-2003,

Welcoming the consultation with member Governments, through the Committee of Permanent Representatives, during the elaboration of the programme of work for the biennium 2000-2001 and the preparation of the draft work programme and budget for the biennium 2002-2003,

Also welcoming the continuing efforts of the Centre to improve its financial and administrative management, to present a harmonized budget in line with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions[10] and to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors in their report for the biennium ended 1999,[11]

Noting that the contributions to the Centre in 1999 and 2000, especially non-earmarked contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation, have proven insufficient to fulfil the mandate of the Centre,

Expressing concern at the existing imbalance between earmarked and non-earmarked contributions and at the fact that only thirty-four and twenty-six Governments in 1999 and 2000, respectively, contributed non-earmarked funds to the Foundation,

Welcoming the significant increase in general-purpose contributions and pledges announced during the eighteenth session of the Commission,

1. Approves the draft work programme for the biennium 2002-2003;

2. Confirms that the work programme for 2002-2003 is in line with the new strategic vision of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and reflects the structure and orientation of the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005;

3. Calls upon the Executive Director to report regularly to Governments, including through the Committee of Permanent Representatives, on progress made in the implementation of the 2002-2003 work programme;

4. Requests the Executive Director to continue to ensure timely consultation with Governments, including through the Committee of Permanent Representatives, during the preparation of future biennial budgets and programmes of work, as well as of medium-term plans;

5. Endorses the formats of the budget and programme of work presented for the biennium 2002-2003,[12] including the harmonized budget and the programme of work, for use in the preparation of future biennial budgets and programmes of work or refinements thereof;

---

10 HS/C/18/9/Add.1.

11 HS/C/18/BD/2.

12 HS/C/18/8 and HS/C/18/9.

6. Requests the Executive Director to take into account the outcome of the United Nations General Assembly special session on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda when preparing the draft budget and work programme for the biennium 2004-2005;

7. Notes with appreciation the results achieved so far in the improvement of the administrative and financial management of the Centre and encourages the Executive Director to continue to pursue these efforts as a matter of urgency, keeping in mind the recommendations of the Board of Auditors as contained in paragraph 11 of its report, those of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions as contained in its report and those contained in the report of the Bureau of the Commission at its seventeenth session on the revitalization of the Centre;[13]

8. Requests the Executive Director to strategically plan and align all activities of the Centre according to its central objectives, its refocused mandate as adopted by the Commission at its seventeenth session, as well as its resources, and to ensure that all activities funded from both earmarked and non-earmarked sources contribute to achieving the programme of work and the core goals of the Centre;

9. Recommends that the Executive Director, in view of the observation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions regarding the accountability of United Nations Office at Nairobi for the cost and quality of services provided to the Centre,[14] propose to the Division of Administrative Services of the United Nations Office at Nairobi that a service-level agreement be concluded between the Centre and the Office;

10. Urges Governments to treat the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation as the central funding vehicle for their voluntary contributions to the Centre, and calls upon all Governments that are in a position to do so to increase their financial support to it, and, to the maximum extent possible, to provide their support as non-earmarked contributions in order to reduce the Centre's over-dependence on earmarked funding;

11. Urges the Executive Director to strengthen the resource mobilization capacity of the Centre and to consider the development of a medium-term fund-raising strategy, in an effort to increase and broaden the resource base and to put the Centre on a stable, adequate and predictable financial basis;

12. Invites all Governments to pledge and make their contributions at the earliest possible date in order to enable the Centre to plan its staffing table and activities more effectively;

13. Recommends that the Executive Director endeavour to ensure that the bulk of additional funding received by the Centre during the biennium is allocated to the implementation of programme activities, rather than to administrative costs;

14. Approves a budget of $23,998,900 for the biennium 2002-2003;

15. Endorses, in principle, the work programme, organizational and budget refinements detailed by the Executive Director in document HS/C/18/9/Add.3, tables I and II, in document HS/C/18/8/Add.1 and in annex II of document HS/C/18/2/Add.4, respectively, and authorizes her, subject to the availability of additional resources, to make commitments above the level of $23,998,900 and up to $31,693,900, accordingly;

---

[13] HS/C/18/2/Add.4, annex I.

[14] HS/C/19/9/Add.1, annex, para.3.

16. Recommends that such commitments be made on a step-by-step basis, with prudence, in the area of organizational units and post levels, consolidating the revitalization so far achieved.

8th meeting
16 February 2001

18/7. Countries with economies in transition

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 53/179 of 15 December 1998 on integration of the economies in transition in the world economy,

Recalling also General Assembly resolutions 54/208 and 54/209 of 22 December 1999 and 55/194 and 55/195 of 20 December 2000 on preparations for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II),

Recalling also resolution 17/3 of 14 May 1999 of the Commission on Human Settlements on countries with economies in transition,

Noting the recommendation made by the Economic and Social Council in its report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, concerning the adoption of a task manager system for pilot projects,[15]

Noting that countries with economies in transition are seeking to promote regional and interregional cooperation,

Convinced of the need to assist in improving housing legislation and implementing housing and communal reform in the housing sector in the countries with economies in transition,

Noting that work in this field of activities is also ongoing in other organizations, in particular in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe,

1. Invites the Executive Director to promote efforts to implement Commission resolution 17/3, with due regard to the needs of the countries with economies in transition for their cooperation programmes within the framework of the Habitat Agenda,[3] in particular, paragraph 202, subparagraphs (c) and (i) of the Agenda, and relevant recommendations of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council;

2. Requests the Executive Director, in line with the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, to use a system of pilot projects for the initiation of comprehensive cooperation programmes with countries with economies in transition under the auspices of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and with the involvement of the United Nations organizations active in promoting sustainable development, particularly the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the World Bank, in order to promote implementation of the key aspects of the Habitat Agenda, focusing on the following priorities aimed at reforming the housing sector in those countries and taking relevant worldwide experience into account:

---

[15] Agreed conclusions 2000/1 (A/55/3, chap. V, para. 6), para. 12.

(a) Establishment of housing legislation to ensure freedom of residence and disposal of housing property;

(b) Mechanisms to promote the implementation of a housing policy in the course of the transition to a market economy;

(c) Reform of management of the housing stock;

(d) Improvement in the management of infrastructure in the housing and communal sectors;

(e) Development of sustainable transportation infrastructure in the course of the planning of human settlements;

(f) Provision of a legal framework for tenants' rights and for public participation in local decision-making;

3. Invites the Executive Director to initiate a series of meetings and workshops under the auspices of the Centre for the countries with economies in transition in order to allow them to exchange their experience in reform of the housing sector, with emphasis on the legal aspects and the involvement of other interested countries and international organizations in those activities;

4. Requests the Executive Director not to encumber general-purpose Foundation resources to undertake these tasks;

5. Requests the Executive Director to report to it at its nineteenth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

8th meeting
16 February 2001

18/8. Youth

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling its resolution 17/19 of 14 May 1999, on partnership with youth,

Noting with appreciation that some Governments have taken steps to support youth activities in accordance with the above-mentioned resolution,

Fully believing that young people are not only future leaders, but also partners of the present day,

Stressing that youth is one of the most vulnerable groups, often denied the benefits of urban life,

Considering the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) campaign on urban governance, which acknowledges the full and equal involvement of women and men and the involvement of youth, taking into account their diverse abilities, realities and experiences, in local government and local governance in general, and considering further the Centre's technical support for the development of city youth parliaments in Latin America and municipal youth councils in Ecuador and Tunisia,

1. Invites the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to continue to work with youth organizations including Youth for Habitat International Network, and all its member organizations in

all fields concerning youth on a participatory basis in all related phases of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

2. Calls upon all Governments in a position to do so to give financial support for related youth activities;

3. Calls upon all Governments, in consultation with the Youth For Habitat International Network and the Centre, to facilitate broad-based and gender-balanced participation, particularly from least developed countries, in the upcoming special session of the United Nations General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda in New York in June 2001, and in the future sessions of the Commission;

4. Invites Governments at all levels to support the development of youth consultations as part of the further implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

8th meeting
16 February 2001

18/9. Revitalization of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 51/177 of 16 December 1996, which gave the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) considerable responsibilities for monitoring and promoting the implementation of the Habitat Agenda,[3] as specified in the Habitat Agenda,

Also recalling decision 1999/281 of 30 July 1999 and the agreed conclusions 2000/1 of the Economic and Social Council on the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), which requested the Secretary-General to consider adopting a Habitat Agenda task manager system to facilitate coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda by the United Nations system,

Also recalling its resolution 17/7 on revitalization of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), which mandated the Executive Director to implement the new strategic vision comprehensively to advance the Habitat Agenda as embodied in the work programme and budget for the Centre for the biennium 2000-2001 and requested the Bureau of the Commission, with the support of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to monitor the progress of the revitalization process and its results in the implementation of the prioritized work programme of the Centre and to report thereon to the Commission at its nineteenth session,

Welcoming General Assembly resolution 55/195 of 20 December 2000, which requested the Secretary-General to consider further strengthening the Centre through the provision of requisite support and stable, adequate and predictable financial resources, including additional regular budget resources and human resources as envisaged by the General Assembly in its resolutions 52/220 of 22 December 1997 and 53/242 of 28 July 1999,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 55/194 of 20 December 2000, which encourages member States and Habitat Agenda partners to provide support to the Centre for the preparation of the Global Report on Human Settlements and the State of the World's Cities report on a biennial basis so as to raise awareness of human settlements issues and to provide information on urban conditions and trends around the world,

Commending the steps taken by the former acting Executive Director to revitalize the Centre and improve its administrative and financial management, and encouraged by the continuation of these efforts and their further strengthening by the new Executive Director,

Encouraged further by the reported increase in the level of voluntary contributions to the Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation by some member States in support of the revitalization of the Centre, a trend that demonstrates a growing commitment to support the strengthening of the Centre to better fulfil its mandate as specified in the Habitat Agenda,

Bearing in mind the significant increase in the activities of the Centre and the new organizational structure and functions of the Centre in the post-Habitat II period,

Recalling the reviews by the Office of Internal Oversight Services of programme and administrative practices and organizational and staffing issues carried out in 1996[16] and 1999,[17] which observed that there was unprocedural assignment of duties and responsibilities to staff at the Centre,

1. Welcomes the appointment by the Secretary-General of the new Executive Director to the Centre;

2. Also welcomes the progress report of the Bureau of the Commission on Human Settlements on revitalization of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (HS/C/18/2/Add.4, annex I), and the appended progress report of the Executive Director,[18] which addresses the concerns raised above;

3. Endorses the measures taken by the Executive Director to rectify the identified weaknesses of the Centre;

4. Calls upon Governments to continue their support for the revitalization of the Centre, a process which is contingent upon provision of requisite stable, adequate and predictable financial and human resources, as highlighted in previous Commission meetings and recently underlined in General Assembly resolution 55/195;

5. Decides to review progress in the revitalization of the Centre at its nineteenth session, under a separate item of the provisional agenda;

6. Requests the Executive Director to report to it at its nineteenth session on progress in further revitalization of the Centre, based on the outline in the above-mentioned Executive Director's report, including progress in the mobilization of requisite financial and human resources to strengthen the Centre's capacity to fulfil its mandate.

8th meeting
16 February 2001

---

16 A/51/884, annex.

17 A/54/764.

18 HS/C/18/2/Add.4, annex II.

18/10. The role of local authorities

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements adopted by the General Assembly, which identifies local authorities as the closest partners of Governments and as essential in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda[3] within the legal framework of each country, and also recalling paragraph 213 of the Habitat Agenda, which states that, while Governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the Habitat Agenda, local authorities should be supported in their efforts towards implementing the Habitat Agenda inasmuch as local action is required,

Noting the importance of building working partnerships and coordination between the different levels of government - national, local and where appropriate intermediate - in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and achieving sustainable development at the local level, taking into consideration the diversity of legal frameworks of each country,

Further recalling paragraph 207 of the Habitat Agenda which calls upon the international community to promote and facilitate the transfer of expertise in support of the implementation of plans of action through, inter alia, supporting networks to facilitate the sharing of experiences on best practices,

Recalling its resolution 17/16 of 14 May 1999 on local implementation of the Habitat Agenda with particular attention to Local Agenda 21s, requesting the Executive Director to increase efforts to sensitize and assist countries in the local level implementation of both the Habitat Agenda and Agenda 21;[6]

Noting with satisfaction the important contributions made by local authorities from all over the world to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, as evidenced by the documentation of over 1,150 best practices since 1995 through the Dubai International Award for Best Practices in Improving the Living Environment,[19]

Further noting the Urban 21 Global Conference on the Urban Future, held in Berlin, Germany, from 4 to 6 July 2000, which highlighted the importance of the role of local authorities for urban development,

Recalling the Chengdu International Conference on Urban Construction and the Environment in the Twenty-first Century, held in Chengdu, China, from 16 to 18 October 2000,[20]

1. Takes note of the reports of the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) regarding local implementation of the Habitat Agenda,[21]

2. Notes with appreciation those countries that have incorporated information on best practices and lessons learned in their national reports and those best practices documented on Habitat's Best Practices Database using the incentive of the Dubai International Award for Best Practices in Improving the

---

[19] See Habitat's Best Practices Database, available on the Internet at http://www.bestpractices.org.

[20] See Chengdu Declaration at http://www.bestpractices.org.

[21] HS/C/18/3 and 3/Add.1.

Living Environment, and urges all countries to submit documented best practices and lessons learned on a regular basis;

3. Invites Governments within the legal framework and national priorities of each country, to consider the following measures as appropriate:

(a) Fully integrate sustainable human settlements development within national sectoral policies and priorities and establish national standards and regulatory frameworks to ensure effective implementation of human settlements programmes at the local level;

(b) Adopt policies and instruments of empowerment that decentralize authority as well as financial, technical and human resources to the local level, ensuring that new responsibilities are matched by the requisite resources;

(c) Facilitate activities such as best practice competitions, policy round tables, training seminars and networks of Inclusive Cities to promote the process of identifying and learning from best practices and scaling up successful shelter and human settlements development programmes at the local level;

(d) Support the increased participation of local authorities in the work of the Commission on Human Settlements, in the work of the Centre and in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, within the relevant rules and regulations of the United Nations;

4. Invites national Governments to facilitate local authorities, with the assistance of their associations, within the legal framework of each country, to consider the following measures as appropriate:

(a) Adopt comprehensive city development strategies as a means of mobilizing all other Habitat Agenda partners behind a common vision and action plan for addressing issues related to adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development;

(b) Provide improved access to legal security of tenure and equal access to land for all people, including women and those living in poverty, as a key element of slum-upgrading and poverty reduction strategies;

(c) Ensure that women and men have equal access to decision-making processes, resources and basic services and that this access is measured through gender-disaggregated data;

(d) Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of local revenue collection and use;

(e) Increase their accountability to local communities through transparent processes and by creating public feedback mechanisms, as appropriate, inter alia, local urban observatories, ombudsman offices, and procedures for public petitioning;

5. Invites the international community, as appropriate, in cooperation with national Governments to consider the following measures:

(a) Support international, regional and national associations and networks of local authorities and the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities and promote their contribution to the work of the Commission on Human Settlements and the Centre;

(b) Support local authorities through, inter alia, improved training, peer-to-peer learning, city-to-city transfers and international exchanges based on documented examples of best practices, good policies and action plans that match the demand for solutions with proven practice;

6. Calls upon the Executive Director to:

(a) Continue to involve local authorities and their international associations in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the work programme of the Centre, and particularly in the two global campaigns, within the rules and regulations of the United Nations;

(b) Continue and expand the identification, analysis and dissemination of best practices, good policies and enabling legislation and action plans, with a particular focus on sustainable human settlements development and urban poverty reduction at the local level;

(c) Report to it at its nineteenth session on progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

8th meeting
16 February 2001

18/11. Intensifying dialogue on effective decentralization and strengthening of local authorities within the framework of implementing the Habitat Agenda

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling that, at the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), held in Istanbul in June 1996, national Governments committed themselves to the objectives of: decentralizing authority and resources, as appropriate, as well as functions and responsibilities to the level most effective in addressing the needs of people in their settlements, and enabling local leadership, promoting democratic rule and strengthening of local authorities to enable all key actors to play an effective role in human settlements and shelter development,

Further recalling that in the Istanbul Declaration,[2] national Governments recognized local authorities as their closest partners, and as essential in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda,[3]

Noting with appreciation the deepening of the partnership at the international level between the Commission, local authorities and their international associations,

Recognizing as a guide for decentralization policies, that decisions should be taken and services delivered at the most local level of government consistent with the nature of the decisions and services involved and within the legal framework of each country,

Taking note of the report of the Executive Director on decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities and their networks for implementation of the Habitat Agenda,[22]

---

[22] HS/C/18/3/Add.1.

Recognizing with satisfaction the growing international trend of decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities to face the challenges of human settlements in the twenty-first century,

Recalling the goals stated in paragraph 12 of the Istanbul Declaration,

Convinced that dialogue on decentralization will provide further impetus to the successful implementation of the Habitat Agenda at all levels,

Taking note of the wide divergence among members of the Commission, in discussing the Executive Director's report, on an international framework[23] for decentralization and strengthening of local authorities and their networks for implementation of the Habitat Agenda,

1. Requests the Director to intensify dialogue among governments at all levels and Habitat partners, initially through the Committee of Permanent Representatives and other appropriate means, on all issues related to effective decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities, including principles and, as appropriate, legal frameworks, in support of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

2. Calls upon the Executive Director to make this dialogue as open-ended and inclusive as feasible;

3. Also requests the Executive Director to report to it at its nineteenth session on progress made in this regard.

8th meeting
16 February 2001

18/12. Illegal Israeli human settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories[24]

The Commission on Human Settlements,

Recalling its resolutions 13/6 of 8 May 1991 and 14/9 of 5 May 1993 on housing for the Palestinian people, and its resolution 16/18 of 17 May 1997 on illegal Israeli human settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories,

Reaffirming its resolution 17/9 of 14 May 1999 on illegal Israeli human settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories,

Considering that the issue of housing for the Palestinian people and the Israeli illegal settlements in the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, falls within the mandate of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat),

Recalling paragraph 25 of the Habitat Agenda,[3] in which it is stated that alien and colonial domination and foreign occupation are destructive to human settlements and should therefore be denounced and discouraged by all States, which should cooperate to achieve the elimination of such practices,

---

[23] Including the idea and the necessity of a World Charter of Local Self-Government or other alternative concepts.

[24] Adopted by 22 votes to 1, with 21 abstensions (see chapter II, paragraph 36 above).

Recalling also paragraph 204 (h) of the Habitat Agenda, which calls for consolidating the solidarity of the international community and its organizations to provide adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development for people living under foreign occupation,

Taking note of General Assembly resolution 55/132 of 8 December 2000 on "Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan",

Concerned by Israel's continued illegal actions in the occupied Palestinian territories, including the building of new settlements, the expansion of existing settlements, the construction of by-pass roads, the confiscation of land and the demolition of Palestinian houses,

Gravely concerned by the deterioration and destruction caused to the Palestinian human settlements as a result of recent Israeli actions in the occupied Palestinian territories,

Regretting that the reports requested in resolution 16/18 and 17/9 were not ready for presentation at the current session,

Taking note of the explanation presented by the Executive Director on the status of the requested comprehensive report on the housing situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, as well as the plans of the secretariat to ensure its completion,

1. Calls upon the Israeli authorities to implement the following measures to enable the Palestinian people in the occupied territories to ensure their housing needs:

(a) Provide dignified and appropriate physical conditions in their human settlements where needed;

(b) Put an end to the confiscation of Palestinian lands and the establishment of settlements in the occupied territories;

(c) Restore to their original state occupied lands that were altered before and during the recent illegal actions;

(d) Refrain from applying policies that prevent and hamper the issuance of building permits to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem;

(e) Accept the de jure applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Times of War to the occupied Palestinian territories;

2. Requests with insistence that member States and all multilateral financial institutions halt all forms of assistance and support for illegal Israeli settlement facilities in the occupied Palestinian territories;

3. Calls upon the international donor community and all financial institutions, in coordination with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), to increase financial assistance to alleviate the housing problems faced by the Palestinian people in the occupied territories;

4. Requests the Executive Director to organize a meeting on the establishment of a human settlements fund for the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;

5. Also requests the Executive Director to conclude and update a comprehensive report on implementation of the present resolution, in particular regarding the housing situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and the problems posed by the Israeli illegal actions in this respect , and to present it to the Commission at its nineteenth session;

6. Invites the Commission to take appropriate measures at its nineteenth session in accordance with the findings of the comprehensive report.

8th meeting
16 February 2001

Annex II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT ITS EIGHTEENTH SESSION

Agenda item	Symbol	Title
		Letter of convocation
		Notification by the Executive Director
3	HS/C/18/1	Provisional agenda for the eighteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements
3	HS/C/18/1/Add.1/Rev.1	Annotations to the provisional agenda, including organization of work
4	HS/C/18/2	Activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
4	HS/C/18/2/Add.1	Housing situation in the occupied Palestinian territories
4	HS/C/18/2/Add.2 and Corr.2	Role of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
4	HS/C/18/2/Add.3	Draft resolutions prepared by the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
4	HS/C/18/2/Add.4	Report of the Bureau of the Commission on Human Settlements on the revitalization of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
5 (a)	HS/C/18/3	Local implementation of the Habitat Agenda, including the role of local authorities
5 (a)	HS/C/18/3/Add.1	Consultations on decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities and their networks for implementation of the Habitat Agenda
5 (b)	HS/C/18/4	International cooperation and the review of mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the Habitat Agenda

5 (c)	HS/C/18/5	Lessons learned from best practices and partnerships in the achievement of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world
6 (a)	HS/C/18/6	Security of tenure
6 (b)	HS/C/18/7	Urban governance
7	HS/C/18/8	Draft work programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2002-2003
7	HS/C/18/8/Add.1	Amendments to the proposed work programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2002-2003
7	HS/C/18/9	Proposed budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 2002-2003
7	HS/C/18/9/Add.1	Proposed budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 2002-2003: report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
7	HS/C/18/9/Add.2	Financial matters: Use of extrabudgetary resources of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in the 2000-2001 period
7	HS/C/18/9/Add.3	Proposed budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 2002-2003: suggested adjustments to the proposed budget
8 (a)	HS/C/18/10	Cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme
8 (b)	HS/C/18/11	Cooperation with agencies and organizations within the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations
8 (c)	HS/C/18/12	Matters arising out of the resolutions of major legislative organs of the United Nations and other intergovernmental bodies which are brought to the attention of the Commission

9	HS/C/18/13	Themes for the nineteenth and future sessions of the Commission
11	HS/C/18/14	Provisional agenda and other arrangements for the nineteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements
7	HS/C/18/BD/1	Draft work programmes of the regional commissions in the field of human settlements for the biennium 2002-2003
7	HS/C/18/BD/2 and Corr.1	United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation: financial report for the biennium ended 31 December 1999 and report of the Board of Auditors
8 (c)	HS/C/18/BD/3	Principal resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth sessions of relevance to the work of the Commission
7	HS/C/18/BD/4	Proposed work programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the biennium 2002-2003: relationship between subprogramme objectives, activities, outputs, actors and resources
3	HS/C/18/INF/1	State of preparedness of the documents for the Commission on Human Settlements at its eighteenth session as at 18 December 2000
3	HS/C/18/INF/2/Rev.1	List of documents before the Commission
4	HS/C/18/INF/3	Operational activities report, 2000
7	HS/C/18/INF/4	Status of voluntary contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation as of 15 December 2000

Annex III

SUMMARIES BY THE CHAIR OF THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, OF THE CONSULTATIONS ON THE DECENTRALIZATION AND STRENGTHENING OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND OF THE DIALOGUES WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND OTHER PARTNERS

A. High-level segment

Introduction

1. The high-level segment of the eighteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements comprised three plenary meetings, held on 12 and 13 February 2001. Its discussions focused on the following two main issues: first, the activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat): progress report of the Executive Director (agenda item 4); second, follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (agenda item 5). The two items were introduced by the Executive Director (see chap. II, paras. 37 to 44 above).

1. Activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)(agenda item 4)

2. Many delegations welcomed the appointment of the new Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat), which would help to strengthen the Centre as a strong independent entity.

3. A number of delegations supported the proposal made for formalizing the relationship between the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the Commission on Human Settlements (HS/C/18/2/Add.2). Several considered that it was necessary to implement the proposals without incurring additional costs, and argued that Committee meetings should be conducted in English alone (option 1 of the proposal).

4. Several delegations emphasized the need to further strengthen UNCHS (Habitat) as a centre of excellence, particularly by focusing on its core activities. General satisfaction and strong support were expressed for the direction and progress of the managerial and administrative reform and revitalization process. Delegations welcomed the steps already taken and those proposed to reorganize the financial and administrative management of the Centre. However, some observed that the ultimate indicator of the Centre's success would be the achievement of the goal of adequate shelter for all, rather than organizational reform.

5. Many delegations pointed out that the strengthening of the Centre required additional financial resources, in particular non-earmarked resources. More-developed as well as less-developed countries were called on to increase their voluntary contributions to the Centre to enable the current revitalization to succeed. One delegation called for an increase in the volume of regular budget funds allocated to UNCHS (Habitat), in order to reduce its dependence on earmarked voluntary contributions. Several considered out that the proposals for restructuring the Centre would have to be implemented in phases as additional resources became available.

6. Many delegations expressed support for the strategic focus on security of tenure and urban governance, as expressed through the two Global Campaigns. Several called for the translation of the Campaigns into concrete operational programmes. Moreover, several delegations mentioned the need to involve national Governments more directly in the implementation of the Campaigns.

7. A number of delegations stressed the importance of the Centre's presence in the regions, and called for the strengthening of its regional offices.

8. Several delegations stressed the importance of urban-rural linkages, an issue to which UNCHS (Habitat) should pay attention to avoid diverting attention from rural areas, villages and smaller towns.

9. Many delegations pointed out the need for UNCHS (Habitat) to address the requests made in Commission resolution 17/9 in relation to the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. In particular they requested the Executive Director to submit the report requested in the resolution.

10. Some delegations called for increased attention to be paid to human settlements conditions in countries with economies in transition, particularly with regard to issues such as housing legislation reform, urban policy and modernization of the housing stock.

11. Several delegations stressed the importance of focusing on gender issues in general and on the issue of discrimination against women in particular. One pointed out the need to mainstream gender issues within the Centre's general budget and not to continue depending on earmarked contributions.

12. Several delegations stressed the importance of the Cities Alliance as a tool for implementing the Centre's programme priorities and for coordinating the efforts of all stakeholders in implementing the Habitat Agenda. However, one pointed out that the Centre's normative role in the partnership would need to be strengthened. Several delegations called for closer links between the Centre and other United Nations agencies, particularly UNEP and UNDP.

13. Several delegations addressed the role of local authorities in human settlements development. A number pointed out that international collaboration was best undertaken through and by national Governments. Others called for local authorities to be given an enhanced role in international development efforts.

14. Some delegations pointed out that the Centre's initiatives should be channelled through established national agencies or organizations, including national Habitat Committees, rather than through individual consultants.

2. Follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

(a) Local implementation of the Habitat Agenda, including the role of local authorities

15. Many delegations reported that their Governments had undertaken considerable efforts in following up on the commitments made at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and in implementing the Habitat Agenda. Many had newly established or strengthened institutions entrusted with the formulation of shelter and urban development policies. Many had created special bodies, such as national shelter advisory boards or agencies to develop and coordinate policies for housing development. Some had set up new or revitalized housing finance institutions, with the focus on providing housing credit for low-income groups.

16. The important role of local government in implementing the Habitat Agenda at the local level was recognized by most delegations. Some welcomed the development of a World Charter of Local Self-Government, but felt that the text needed further revision to make it acceptable to all countries with their varied socio-political circumstances. However, one representative speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and supported by other delegations cautioned against a globally binding World Charter, which would not take into account countries' specific cultural, economic and political contexts. He stressed that the relations between central and local government had to be governed by the constitution and legal system of each country.

17. A number of delegations reported on reforms and the enactment of new legislation to strengthen local government and enable local authorities to play a more important role in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Some reported on the success of their decentralization policies, which had strengthened local government in developing partnerships with other stakeholders in shelter and sustainable urban development.

(b) International cooperation and the review of mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the Habitat Agenda

18. Many delegations expressed support for a stronger role for UNCHS (Habitat) in international coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda within the United Nations system and supported the proposed task manager system to coordinate and monitor the contributions of United Nations agencies to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

19. Many delegations emphasized the need for more international cooperation and support for their efforts to achieve the goals of shelter for all and sustainable urban development. In that context, some delegations advocated strong efforts by the Centre directed towards capacity-building. Many delegations referred to the technical cooperation support provided by the Centre and expressed appreciation for its efforts in the area of capacity-building. A number voiced the hope that a revitalized Centre would be able to provide more assistance to their countries in their efforts towards achieving the twin goals of shelter for all and sustainable urban development.

20. Many delegations expressed strong support for the Centre's campaigns on secure tenure and good urban governance, with their strong focus on some of the most crucial issues. Those campaigns were considered to be important entry points for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Some delegations expressed their expectation of sustained follow-up activities.

(c) Lessons learned from best practices and partnerships in the achievement of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world

21. Many delegations expressed their satisfaction with the Centre's Best Practices programme, describing it as an excellent tool by which countries could learn from each other. Applicable examples ranged from the enactment of relevant legislation and the formulation of national action plans to specific projects in shelter provision, housing finance and urban management.

B. Consultations on the decentralization and strengthening of local authorities

Introduction

22. The Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly for an Overall Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Habitat Agenda recommended in its resolution 1/5 that "the Commission on Human Settlements should include a consultation on the effective decentralization and strengthening of local authorities and their associations and networks on the agenda of its eighteenth session, in relation with the item on local implementation of the Habitat Agenda, including the role of local authorities".

23. Accordingly, the Commission held consultations on the effective decentralization and strengthening of local authorities and their associations and networks at its 4th plenary meeting, on 13 February 2001.

24. The Commission had before it a report by the Executive Director entitled "Consultations on the effective decentralization and strengthening of local authorities and networks" (HS/C/18/3/Add.1).

Discussion

25. All those who participated in the consultations expressed strong support for the principles of decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities, while several delegations also mentioned the important contribution of the European Charter on Local Self-Government in strengthening the contribution of local authorities. Several delegations expressed the view that local autonomy did not replace solidarity between all levels of government, and underlined the need for partnerships with the private sector and civil society. Several delegations voiced their concerns with regard to the binding nature of the proposed World Charter of Local Self-Government.

26. Some delegations expressed opposition to the proposed Charter on the grounds of its legally binding nature, the concept of local autonomy and the apparent contradiction between a universal model and a diverse world. The representative of the World Associations of Cities and Local Authorities Co-ordination described the genesis and development of the proposed World Charter and explained that it was intended to be flexible and adaptable to different contexts and legal frameworks.

27. Other delegations strongly supported the idea of a World Charter of Local Self-Government, while emphasizing that signing up to such a charter should be voluntary and that it would by no means constitute a universal model to be adhered to. One speaker said that local autonomy did not weaken the role of central government, and stressed the need for collaboration between all levels of government as a means of ensuring equity. Another said that local self-government made sense only if it was based on partnerships with central government, the private sector and civil society.

28. Some delegations emphasized that the draft Charter presented a menu of options from which countries could select in the light of their national constitutions and legal and administrative frameworks. A large majority of delegations that spoke supported the proposal made by the Executive Director for continuing dialogue and the setting up of an intergovernmental committee which would report to the Commission at its nineteenth session. However, some were not in favour of establishing such a committee, on the grounds that it would merely prolong the discussions on the charter, whereas there was a need for continuing dialogue among all partners on the key issues of decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities in support of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

29. All the delegations agreed on the need for and usefulness of continuing dialogue on decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities, but no consensus was reached on whether the dialogue should continue in a formal or informal manner. A representative of the secretariat pointed out that informal consultations had been taking place in all regions over the past three years. The Chair proposed that an informal contact group should be set up to seek consensus on the continuing dialogue for further consideration by the Drafting Committee.

C. Dialogues with local authorities and other partners

Introduction

30. A dialogue with local authorities and other partners on good urban governance was held at the 5th plenary meeting, on 14 February 2001. A second dialogue with local authorities and other partners on secure tenure was held at the 6th plenary meeting, also on 14 February 2001.

31. The dialogue on "Good urban governance: bridging the divided city" was introduced by Professor Richard Stren, Professor of Political Economy, University of Toronto, Canada, Mayor Celso Daniel, Mayor of Santo André, Brazil, Ms. Sheela Patel, Director, SPARC, India, and Mr. Max Ng'andwe, President, International Union of Local Authorities.

32. The dialogue on secure tenure was introduced by Mr. Jockin, President of the National Slum Dweller Federation of India, Hon. Djejouma Sanon, Minister of Housing, Burkina Faso, Ms. Jane Weru, Executive Director of Pamoja Trust (Kenya), Ms. Maria Locia Petersen, Municipality of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Ms. Tabitha Siwale, Secretary of the Habitat International Coalition – Women and Shelter Network and Director of the Women's Advancement Trust, a Tanzanian non-governmental organization, and Professor Geoffrey Payne (United Kingdom).

Discussion

1. Good urban governance: bridging the divided city

33. In discussing the divided city, the participants focused on four broad issues: (a) the relationship between good urban governance and poverty reduction; (b) the need for participatory democracy to reinforce representative democracy; (c) the need to create new mechanisms to support the urban poor more effectively in development; and (d) the obstacles to realizing good urban governance.

34. It was observed that the quality of urban governance is widely recognized as having a major impact on the reduction of poverty and promoting more inclusive cities. Some speakers, however, felt that there was a risk of oversimplifying the question of poverty by making it exclusively an issue of failed governance. Others emphasized that the quality of urban governance was important not only for achieving poverty reduction targets, but also for implementing the Habitat Agenda and for realizing the broader goals of sustainable development.

35. Speakers also discussed the need to reinforce representative democracy with participatory democracy. Some felt that without representative democracy, effective participation would not be possible. Others expressed concern that the importance of representative democracy and the role of political parties were not being recognized, and felt that representative democracy, at all levels, was a prerequisite for good urban governance. Yet others noted that representative democracy often served the interests of the rich and the powerful, leaving many groups, including women and the poor, excluded. Participatory democracy, it was argued, helped to ensure that all groups were involved in setting the developmental and policy agenda. Participants also noted that the poor had an important contribution to make to urban development, one that was often not tapped. The challenge was to convert the assets of the poor into productive capacity. In many cities, for example, the poor had mobilized themselves and were delivering services to their communities without any external support. Institutions that enabled, supported and protected the poor were fundamental to good urban governance. In that regard, the important role of governments in creating enabling frameworks and resolving conflicts between competing interests was highlighted. The active participation of women was also regarded as vital not only for poverty reduction, but also for improving the quality of urban governance.

36. Participants identified several obstacles to good urban governance, including the poor quality of urban data, inflexible public finance mechanisms and weak capacity at the local level. It was also noted that promoting inclusiveness was a bigger challenge in mega-cities than in smaller cities.

2. Secure tenure

37. There was general agreement that the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure would help the United Nations and its Member States to establish a new working relationship with organizations of the urban poor and recognize people living in poverty as strategic development partners. Some speakers argued that it was important to increase the decision-making powers of local wards, councils and administrative units at the sub-municipal level. Local councils, they said, enabled the organized poor to demonstrate their capacity and hold local governments accountable.

38. Speakers reaffirmed that the Global Campaign was an effective tool for the United Nations to strengthen the strategic role of women in development, particularly in the upgrading of slums and informal settlements. Some speakers mentioned that cultural practices and social conditions often prohibited women from exercising their rights to own, control, purchase and inherit land - even when those rights were enshrined in national legislation.

39. There was general agreement that the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure should promote security of tenure, rather than a particular form of tenure. It was agreed that since most slum dwellers were renters, rapid regularization and private titling of informal settlements would displace the poor. Some speakers mentioned the need to preserve "family" lands and other forms of collective ownership rather than replace them with systems of tenure based on individual freehold. Others stressed the need to recognize that different forms of tenure coexisted side by side in informal settlements.

40. There was further agreement that the Global Campaign should ensure that high-level launches were followed by operational initiatives in the form of capacity-building activities and slum-upgrading. In his synthesis of the Dialogue, the Chair stated that putting the Global Campaign into practice rested on three conditions: demonstrated political will, the existence of committed organizations of the poor and genuine partnerships between those organizations and government at all levels. He also emphasized that the Global Campaign should be implemented in accordance with the priorities of local actors in different countries. Such an approach was sound, realistic and conducive to effective results.

Annex IV

SUMMARIES OF OPENING STATEMENTS

A. Statement by Mr. Germán García Durán, Chair of the Commission on Human Settlements at its seventeenth session

1. Mr. García Durán said that, as the outgoing Chair of the Commission, it was an honour for him to address the opening meeting of the eighteenth session. The biennium that was just concluding had seen the launch of a plan for the revitalization of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), which enabled it to present a positive image that day by day earned it greater trust and backing from the international community. The architects of that process had been Mr. Klaus Töpfer, acting Executive Director of Habitat until August 2000, and the newly appointed Executive Director since then, Mrs. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka. Mr. Töpfer had conceived the idea and set the work in motion, convened a high-level multidisciplinary team and given it the task of revitalizing the Centre, while the new Executive Director, whose training and experience were known to all, had carried on the work already begun, to be consolidated by the firm support of governments at the present eighteenth session of the Commission.

2. Included in the wide range of documentation before the present session of the Commission was a report prepared by the Bureau, as requested in resolution 17/7, on follow-up on progress achieved in the revitalization process. In that report, the Bureau had touched on its concern at the scarcity of resources, especially non-earmarked funds, and the need for more professional staff in the areas of administration and financial management. Other matters brought up had included synergy between the Centre and other organizations, the proposal to formalize the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the facilitation of preparatory work for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. In conclusion, he expressed his thanks to the outgoing Bureau and to the Committee of Permanent Representatives for their constant support and help, and to Mr. Töpfer and Mrs. Tibaijuka and their secretariats, who had greatly facilitated his work.

B. Opening remarks by Mrs. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

3. In her opening statement, after welcoming the delegates, the Executive Director expressed special thanks to President Daniel T. Arap Moi of Kenya for his Government's continued support for the strengthening of United Nations activities in Nairobi. She also welcomed Mr. Joan Clos, the Mayor of Barcelona and Chair of the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities, which had been established in Venice in January 2000 at the request of the Commission at its seventeenth session. She thanked Mr. Klaus Töpfer and Mr. Germán García Durán, who, as acting Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) and Chair of the Commission, respectively, had rectified many of the Centre's past problems and had successfully embarked on the process of revitalizing it.

4. The revitalization of UNCHS (Habitat) would be an ongoing process that would require continuing adjustments. That had been recognized by the General Assembly in resolution 55/195, which called upon the Secretary-General to secure adequate funding for the strengthening of the Centre. The time was opportune for rebuilding and strengthening UNCHS (Habitat), as both population growth and urbanization were increasing rapidly, with the world's urban population doubling to 3 billion between 1950 and 2001. That rapid increase had overtaxed the ability of cities to cope - more than a billion city dwellers lacked adequate shelter and basic services - and caused serious environmental problems, highlighting the interdependence of urban governance and environmental governance.

5. In the light of the challenges facing UNCHS (Habitat), human settlements development had to be a priority. Recognizing this, world leaders had pledged at the Millennium Summit to improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by the year 2020 and had adopted the Habitat Agenda as a "practical road map to an urbanizing world". At its seventeenth session the Commission had also adopted a new vision and added a normative dimension to the Centre's operational activities by approving two campaigns that provided clear entry points to those seeking to address the challenges of human settlements development: the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure and the Global Campaign for Good Governance. Those two campaigns - the first of which had been successfully launched in the preceding year in Mumbai, Kosovo, Paris and Durban, and the second of which would be launched in the months following the current session in India and Nigeria - were seeking to build on a rights-based development agenda that put people at the centre of development and saw human rights and freedom as the fundament of sustainable development. As exemplified by the two campaigns, UNCHS (Habitat) was promoting a "spirit of urban belonging, engagement and reciprocity ... a culture of solidarity and inclusiveness in all human settlements".

6. The two global campaigns also exemplified a new cooperative approach at UNCHS (Habitat), in pursuance of which collaboration with other agencies both within and outside the United Nations was encouraged and negative and destructive competition was discouraged. The Cities Alliance initiative, undertaken jointly with the World Bank, was an example of that approach, as was a joint UNCHS (Habitat)/UNEP liaison office to the European Commission in Brussels, the joint UNCHS (Habitat)/UNEP Managing Water for African Cities programme and other programmes such as a disaster management programme in Iraq and the Housing and Property Claims Commission and Housing and Property Directorate in Kosovo.

7. In addition to its other activities, UNCHS (Habitat) was the secretariat for the preparatory process for the special session of the General Assembly on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. The purpose of the review and appraisal process was to establish concrete initiatives for further implementing the Habitat Agenda. Those initiatives would be agreed at the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the special session, but the current meeting was nevertheless critical for sending a signal about UNCHS (Habitat)'s importance and the need to establish its credibility as the United Nations system-wide focal point on the Habitat Agenda.

8. In closing, she observed that UNCHS (Habitat) needed to establish itself as a leader in the provision of information on urbanization, and at the same time to increase its normative and operational activities, including the provision of policy advice on legal regimes to promote housing rights and inclusive cities, analysis of urban problems and their underlying economic causes and training and other forms of capacity-building. None of that would be possible without an increase in staff and resources. UNCHS (Habitat) needed secure funding, and she asked the delegates to honour the resolutions of the General Assembly calling for the further strengthening of UNCHS (Habitat) and to listen to the voices of the children who, earlier in the opening meeting, had told the delegates of their hopes and fears for their lives in the cities of Kenya.

C. Statement by Mr. Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme

9. In his opening address, the Executive Director of UNEP said that the Centre and UNEP had been inextricably linked for 25 years, not only because they shared the same premises, but also because they were the only two United Nations institutions to be headquartered in the developing world. Implementation of the mandates of the two institutions was also closely linked, as underlined by resolution 53/242 of the General Assembly. There could be no global environmental sustainability without the sustainability of human settlements, without overcoming divided cities, without secure tenure, without good urban governance and without shelter for all. He said that he would continue to be fully committed to the

prosperous and dynamic development of the Centre. On behalf of UNEP, and on his own behalf, he affirmed total support for all the endeavours of the Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat).

10. The Commission was meeting at a time of unprecedented international awareness with regard to poverty reduction and improvement of the environment and human settlements. It was also a time when environment and human settlements had taken their rightful place at centre stage in the development arena in preparation for the 5-year review of the Cities Summit held in Istanbul in 1996 and the 10-year review of the Earth Summit held in Rio in 1992, designated as the World Summit for Sustainable Development and scheduled to be held in Johannesburg in 2002.

11. UNEP and Habitat were cooperating in emergencies, in finding solutions to problems related to water and sewage and planning for waste, pollution and cities. He was therefore gratified to note that common projects such as "Managing Water for African Cities", the Urban Environment Forum, the Sustainable Cities Programme and the Cities Alliance were continuing and could be further developed.

12. He drew attention to the following interrelations between human settlements and the environment: rapid desertification was linked with the appearance of more and more environmental refugees, increasing the pressure on and explosive growth of urban areas; climate change was a direct threat to human settlements, given that nearly 40 per cent of cities with populations greater than 500,000 were located on coasts; the increase in the occurrence of malaria was a direct threat to human health and was also related to climate change; air pollution, especially that linked with mobility in the larger settlements, exceeded health standards in many mega-cities; and there was a public health hazard from contaminated water supplies and all kinds of disease transmission from inadequately treated sewage. All those challenges fell in areas of common responsibility for the Centre and UNEP, and the list could be easily extended. The common denominator for the Centre and UNEP would always be the two institutions' concrete contribution to the attainment of the main target of the Millennium Declaration which heads of State and government had adopted in New York in 2000 – "to reduce poverty by 50 per cent by 2015".

13. He assured the Commission that UNEP would continue to cooperate with the Centre substantively and technically to achieve the common aim of sustainable cities in a sustainable globalized world, making the vision of the World Summit in Rio and the Cities Summit in Istanbul a reality: to overcome poverty in a world of economic progress, with social equity, cultural identity and environmental precaution.

D. Statement by H.E. Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi, President of Kenya

14. After welcoming the participants, President Moi congratulated Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka on her appointment to the post of Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) and said that she was taking up the management of the Centre at a time when the problems of shelter and sustainable urbanization had increased in both scope and complexity, owing to rapid urbanization, especially in developing countries. The successful implementation of the Habitat Agenda would continue to be of vital importance in the twenty-first century.

15. Noting that it was nearly five years since the holding of the Habitat II conference and the adoption of the Istanbul Declaration and the Habitat Agenda, he said that, as agreed at Istanbul, human health and quality of life must be at the centre of any meaningful effort to develop sustainable human settlements. He assured the participants of Kenya's commitment and support for the preparatory process for the five-year review, and the special session itself.

16. The work of the current session of the Commission and the forthcoming session of the Preparatory Committee would be crucial for the success of the special session. There had been a striking lack of meaningful progress in meeting the challenges of ensuring adequate shelter for all, and to a very large

extent most of the issues set out in the Agenda were still outstanding. Globally the past five years had been characterized by widespread poverty, recurrent armed conflicts and disasters, including droughts, floods and earthquakes. The impacts of changing global economic trends had also added to the toll. The adverse effects of those negative factors were more pronounced in developing countries, particularly in Africa, where the ability to cope was still weaker than in other countries. The special session would thus need to put in place concrete initiatives to strengthen global action to fulfil the commitments of the Habitat Agenda and ensure the achievement of its goals. Developing countries, and particularly those in Africa, required special support in their efforts to tackle rampant poverty, ensure disaster preparedness, develop mechanisms for early resolution of conflicts and improve the livelihoods of their citizens, especially those living in slum conditions in urban areas.

17. By pursuing the goal of "cities without slums," the livelihoods of at least 100 million slum dwellers could be changed fundamentally and irreversibly by the year 2020. More importantly, through that undertaking, the international community had underscored the potential for urban settlements to influence development in the twenty-first century, as well as the need to improve people's livelihoods. In line with that objective, he was pleased to announce that his Government and UNCHS (Habitat) were finalizing preparations for a slum-upgrading project in Nairobi, drawing on lessons learned globally. He hoped that the project would pave the way for the implementation of similar projects in other towns in Kenya, and lead to a lasting solution to the slum problem in the country.

18. Besides revitalization and reform, the Centre required adequate and predictable funding, in order to fulfil its mandate. The issue of human settlements was too important to be left in the hands of international philanthropists alone. He hoped that the international community would institute firm measures to ensure stable funding for UNCHS (Habitat) and reduce its dependence on voluntary contributions. That would enable the Executive Director to focus more on the management of the Centre and on programme delivery.

19. The interconnected nature of many issues had been shown in the children's presentation. The future of the world lay in Africa's wealth and he urged the participants to help Africa to overcome its problems. The city of Nairobi was growing and land was becoming scarce. It was necessary to tackle the huge problem of urbanization. Slum areas needed water and, to get it, they needed money. The third world war would be caused over water, and the problem needed to be tackled now. Protection of water could not be provided piecemeal. But the leaders of the developed countries did not want to listen. They wanted to tell Africa what to do. The money spent on all their seminars should rather be spent on alleviating slum conditions.

20. All participants were no doubt aware that the United Nations had recently downgraded the Nairobi duty station on the grounds of insecurity and problems related to infrastructure and energy. He wished to assure everyone that his Government was doing everything it could to resolve those problems. Road repairs and maintenance work were in progress in the city and elsewhere in the country. The energy situation had also improved considerably following the recent rains. The security problem had been worsened by the increase in poverty and unemployment during the last few years. Perhaps the relative security of Nairobi in the past had put it in the limelight, given that crime was a problem for cities the world over, especially in developing countries. It was pertinent to note that the journalists who reported on all the problems of neighbouring countries chose to live in Nairobi themselves. However, the Government of Kenya was committed to addressing the situation by tackling the social causes of insecurity, as well strengthening measures to curb crime. Indeed, in the last few months crime levels in Nairobi and throughout the country had shown a downward trend. He therefore urged all participants to feel safe, and wished them a pleasant stay in Kenya.

E. Statement by Mr. Sid-Ali Ketrandji, Chair of the Commission at its eighteenth session

21. In his statement following his election, the Chair expressed appreciation for the honour accorded to him and his country and assured the Commission and the Executive Director that he would do his utmost to discharge the very important duties and responsibilities bestowed upon him. He looked forward to cooperation from all the members of the Commission and the secretariat to enable him, together with all participants, to make the session a success. He also expressed the appreciation of all members of the Commission to Mr. Germán García Durán for having successfully led and conducted the work of the Commission during its seventeenth session in May 1999, and for the work which the Bureau of the Commission had carried out under his able leadership during the inter-sessional period.

22. He was very conscious of the importance of the issues before the current session, especially when put within the context of the revitalization and strengthening of UNCHS (Habitat). The Centre was at a crossroads, particularly with regard to its future and, consequently, its ability to deliver the services expected of it. Due to the problems experienced by the Centre since the historic Istanbul Conference, some momentum had been lost in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda at the local, national, regional and global levels. Therefore, there was an urgent need for the Commission to deliberate and pronounce itself in very unequivocal terms on what should happen to UNCHS (Habitat) and, consequently, to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, since those recommendations were pivotal to the revival and accelerated implementation of the Habitat Agenda. The strategic vision adopted at the seventeenth session underlined three very important aspects for consideration at the current session: adopting a new implementation strategy by advocating the needs of the poor, through the two global campaigns on secure tenure and urban governance; sharpening the focus of the Centre's work; and strengthening the normative capacity and the linkages between normative work and operational activities.

23. He concluded by appealing to all participants to assist him and cooperate in ensuring that the results of the session were what participants would like them to be, what governments would like them to be, what the respective regions would like them to be and, most importantly, what the poor, disadvantaged and homeless majority of the populations of the world would like them to be.

Annex V

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AT ITS EIGHTEENTH SESSION

1. It gives me great pleasure to send my greetings to all who have gathered in Nairobi for this eighteenth session of the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements.

2. As you know all too well, more than a billion of our fellow men and women around the world lack adequate shelter. The Millennium Declaration adopted at last September's Millennium Summit focused welcome attention on the fear, despair and miserable living conditions that characterize so many of the world's human settlements. Many of the development goals to which world leaders committed themselves in the Declaration were based on the work of United Nations world conferences of the previous decade, including the Habitat Agenda adopted at Habitat II in Istanbul. Among the wide-ranging commitments made by world leaders, all of which would contribute to progress in the area of human settlements, was the specific pledge to improve, by the year 2020, the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

3. As custodians of the Habitat Agenda, the Commission on Human Settlements and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements have a leading role to play in helping the international community to meet these challenges. The Commission can also do much to ensure the success of the special session of the General Assembly to be held in June in New York to review progress since Habitat II. You will have to work with a broad range of partners - including local authorities, non-governmental organizations, private-sector enterprises and other delegations of civil society. And you will have to focus on a wide range of issues - not only the provision of services and resources, but also environmental questions and the functioning of markets, financial systems and public administration.

4. In a world in which half of humanity now lives in cities and towns, the urbanization of poverty is one of the biggest global challenges of the new millennium. Slums and spontaneous settlements are wellsprings of entrepreneurial energy that can and must be mobilized. Together, we must offer the inhabitants of our cities and other human settlements the prospect of security, prosperity and a sustainable future. I wish you every success in your deliberations.

Annex VI

COMMONWEALTH INPUT TO THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR AN OVERALL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HABITAT AGENDA

1. In 1998 the Commonwealth launched an independent initiative to address the challenges of the Habitat Agenda in its 54 member countries. The consensual mechanism it created for this purpose was the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements.

2. Intergovernmental consultations culminated in the adoption by the Group of a new Commonwealth goal which informs all its programmes and activities. The goal requires demonstrated progress towards adequate shelter for all with secure tenure and access to essential services in every community by 2015.

3. In pursuit of this goal, the Group has produced a "Commonwealth input to Istanbul + 5", which includes a number of important priorities for action to guide shelter development activity throughout the Commonwealth for the foreseeable future.

4. On behalf of the 54 member countries of the Commonwealth, the representative of Zambia introduced this input at the eighteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements and requested the insertion of the present summary in the Commission's report to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly for an Overall Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Habitat Agenda, and subsequently to the special session itself, as the independent contribution of the Commonwealth to the global efforts of the Commission to implement the Habitat Agenda.

01-33056 (E) 010601